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# PORTAGE SENTINEL.

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## Poetry.

### TRUTH AND FREEDOM.

By W. D. GALLAGHER.

"He is a rebel who the Tabernacle makes free,  
And all are slaves within his power."

For the Truth, then, let us battle,  
Whichever side betides.

Long the fight that we are fighting,  
We have made and published wide.

He who has the Truth, and keeps it,  
Keeps not what to him belongs.

But performs a selfish action,  
That his fellow-mortals wrong.

He who tells the Truth, and trembles  
At the danger he must brave,

Is not fit to be a Freeman—  
No, at least, is not a slave.

He who hears the Truth, and places  
Its high precepts under ban,

Loud may boast of all that's manly,  
But can never be a man.

Friends, this simple lay who readest,  
Be not thou like either them—  
But to truth give utmost freedom,  
And the tide it raises, stem.

Bold in speech and bold in action,  
Be forever—time will test,  
Of the free-soul'd and the lavish,  
Which fulfils life's mission best.

Be thou like a noble Roman—  
Scorn the threat that bids thee fear;  
Speak!—no matter what betide thee;  
Let them strike, but make them hear!

Be thou like the first Apostles—  
Be thou like heroic Paul;  
If a free thought seek expression,  
Speak it boldly!—speak it all!

Face thine enemies—accuse;  
Scorn the prison, rack or rod!  
And if thou hast Truth to utter,  
Speak! and leave the rest to God.

## Miscellany.

From the New York Mirror.

### THE WIDOW'S SON.

THAT is a beautiful strength which is gained through tears; but how severe a lesson which teaches us patience and fortitude under trials. The Widow Mellen learned this lesson early in life, and bore on her countenance the stamp of calm resignation, which trials nobly borne are calculated to give. I have her face before me now, as she used to look when she walked into the village church on Sunday; a pale, sad face, it was, but with not enough of melancholy to destroy the effect of a smile that ever rested there with so much of holiness in it, that one wondered how sorrows could have dimmed her beauty, and yet given her such a heavenly grace. The becoming black bonnet of the widow, the rusty, crumpled shawl, worn in summer over a black silk gown, and in winter over a pelisse, were as well known there and as duly expected as the time-worn suit of the minister himself. She was always an object of attraction and sympathy, and many a time strangers would turn their eyes even from the preacher, to gaze at the pleasant but faded lady in the corner pew. Every body knew her; all the neighbors could tell volumes in her praise, for who was so ready for a good deed as the Widow Mellen? who knew so well how to cheer the afflicted?—for, God bless her—she had known so many afflictions herself. What sick-bed was there where she did not prove herself a kind and faithful nurse? And for charity—Christian charity, who had so open a hand, though how, with her small means she managed to even keep her own little house so tidy and comfortable, was a mystery to all. That little house nestled pleasantly at the foot of the hill by the church, and half hid in a wilderness of sweet briars and locust trees; had no inmates but the widow and her orphan niece, Fanny Grey. But all the elder people in the village could remember the time when a young thriving couple, no other than honest John Mellen and the now lone widow—dwelt there surrounded by a troop of lovely children as ever made two hearts glad. But there came a sad change over them. Poor Mrs. Mellen had sometimes said in the fulness of her heart of joy, yet with a kind of presentiment of coming ill which so frequently intrudes itself in the midst of happiness—"my life is as glad as a burst of sunshine, as for care and sorrow, I never knew what they were, and we seem so blessed now, I almost fear this cannot last."

And it did not last. There came sorrows, one after another, till from her cradled and happy heart, she shed

"It is enough! Father in mercy spare me no longer!" But she was spared—as if to see how much one heart might bear without breaking. It was a bitter trial to feel a mother's first grief, where she pressed her hand on the icy-cold brow of her first-born boy; but bitterer still when the young husband who had just begun his life with her, was laid in the grave, and she was left with the wretched helplessness of one who has garnered her early happiness in a form of earth, and the burden of caring for and training up her little fatherless flock. But these left her soon—one by one, the bright buds were severed from the stem, till she, the mother of the beautiful, stood with all her household idols shattered around her—all but one; and that one, the youngest and fairest of all, was a fragile thing, that seemed destined to share the fate of his fallen playmates. But his very weakness gave her strength, for with the consciousness that he needed a protector and cherisher, came a wish to do her duty, and a sense of her life's value for his sake. So she nourished the bud, and when it expanded she found a thorn to pierce her.

She toiled morning and night for his sake;—she denied herself to give him luxuries; she watched over him as none but a mother can watch, until all her hopes and wishes were centered in her child. And he was the sunlight to her dwelling; he kissed away her tears and encouraged her, and told her how happily they two might pass their lives together. His smile lightened her sorrows, and his glad, cheering mirth through the long day beguiled her weariness; and when year after year rolled round, and she saw his good and generous feelings developing, she prized too highly the treasure, which, like one drop of mercy in a cup of sorrow, had been given her, and she thanked heaven that she had been spared to guide one lamb to their eternal home. He was a bright noble boy, and promised to be a blessed support in her advancing years. It did her good to hear the neighbors talk of him; her eye would light up and her cheek glow with unworldly lustre; and alas for her, she woke from her dream to remember that earth's perishable idols are of clay. The boy—little Ned Mellen, as he was called—bore as good a heart as ever beat—a heart guarded all around by a tallisman, and that was a mother's influence, and knowing and exulting in her power, she did not believe that he could fall. But his frank and unsuspecting nature rendered him an easy dupe to those who take advantage of the young and truthful. All unconsciously to her, and almost so to himself, he became connected with bad associates, and that too when temptations are the strongest. They gained him first by rousing his pride, and yielding to impulse, he joined them, because they had said he dared not. After they had tried other means, by flattery and praising him they won him, till he felt a pleasure in the society he had before shrank from. The progress in guilt was gradual but sure, and so imperceptible, that it was long before his mother was aware of it; but by and by, when she perceived a strange flush on his cheek, and an unusual brilliancy about his eye, she was troubled. She felt that something was wrong with him, and yet hardly knew what to fear; but at last friends who had learned the truth told her to speak of it, told her how he had been spending his time and money with a knot of wild young men; and she, drew him to her side one evening, and questioned him kindly and gently of the wrong he had done. The boy was touched to the heart and he bared his whole soul to her as he would to Heaven, and on his knees, in the stillness of her room, prayed for strength to keep from evil. She felt sure that he would thereforth do right, but now there was a new burden for her to bear, which became every day heavier and heavier.

Ned wouldn't willingly have added one sorrow to his widowed parent; but he was young, still a mere boy, and had not firmness to resist temptation. Soon he began to avoid his mother, for he could not meet her clear, searching eye, and conceal one truth from her. He did not mean to do wrong, but those boys who enticed him to risk his earnings with them at the gambling and little lotteries, seemed so like his friends, he could not believe them capable of evil designs. If they had effected to dispise his principles, or ridiculed his mother, he would have left them; they understood him too well for that, and hired him by hypocrisy and flattery. They persuaded him to venture more and more, till in one rash moment he took a sum of money from a friend, then he did not dare to see his mother, and

frightened at his guilt, he left his home with one of his companions, without even bidding her farewell. That was a fearful blow for the heart-stricken widow, and from that day she knew no happiness. She could not reproach her self for having neglected him, for if ever mother rightly trained a child, that one was the widow Mellen; but her conscience smote her for such blind idolatry of a human being, and she almost felt it a just punishment. She did not censure him, for she now could trace the gradations of guilt, from the first light wanderings to the last fatal act, and pitied and forgave him.

But oh! that desolate mother's agony! He had been her all, and now she was alone in the world, with but the one orphan niece, who became a child to her when her own had forsaken her. But to have reared him to guilt and shame! It was fearful—that mother's agony; and in her suffering she cried, "my God! why hast thou forsaken me! But she was not all forsaken. Tears washed away the healthy hue from her cheek, and wrinkles gathered on her brow, and every year her form gradually stooped, but after the first grief-storm was past, she bore in mind, how strong and pure and lasting as eternity is a mother's influence. Could the holy spell which had guarded him in his early youth lose its magic now! Must it be that her self-sacrificing labor for him was to have no meed this side of the grave? He would come back; she could not believe that her prayers and her affection had been like a breath upon the water, and acknowledging the power that exalted her weakness, she bowed her head in silent suffering, and found in this her consolation. People wondered how the widow, who had lived through so many trials, could bear this; but they knew not the enduring hope within—the strength gained through sorrow, as she knelt by the graves of her household, and asked to live for one erring child. To cheer others in affliction, and to minister to the wants of the needy, became the greatest relief to her weary life. She had likewise a sad pleasure in watching the flowers Ned had planted, and training over the door the honeysuckle he had loved. In the dreary winter she cherished the beautiful rosebud he had brought her, the very day he went away. A little slip it was, then, but from year to year it put forth blossoms, and curtained the window with its foliage. But the boy for whose sake she tended it did not come. One letter came to the friend he had wronged, with the sum of money he had taken, and in that a message for his mother. That was a blessing for her, but when years passed away, and she heard no more of him, the fearful conjecture came home to the heart that he might be dead. And now sickness came upon her, and with this new anxiety she could not bear up as before; and when October was putting on its funeral garb for the death of the flowers, there was increasing gloom in the widow's cottage, and the kind friends said that she would never see the budding of another spring-time.

One evening when they had left her to the care of her faithful Fanny, remarking, as they went, how unusually cheerful the invalid seemed, she began to be quite alone, and silently she held communion with her God, and invoking one blessing on her lost child, asked once more in anguish that she might see him. Just then a shadow fell where the moonbeams had flickered over her pillow, and with an intense watchfulness she listened to a strange step, and then heard a voice in bitter agony exclaim, "Is it too late?"

The next moment by her bedside bowed a pallid, but oh, how familiar face, and the bloodless lip that pressed her thin, white hand faltered, "Mother! oh, mother, forgive me!" She twined her fingers about his hands, and clasping them in hers, lifted up a voice of thanksgiving. "Lay your hands on my head and bless me, mother, as you used to do." "Not in guilt, my son. Look up and tell your mother that you have repented: tell me all, Edward, my beloved, that I may die in peace."

"You must not die," gasped the youth. "Heaven's will be done!" fervently ejaculated she. "No, I do not believe you are guilty now, for just then thro' the open window, streamed the silvery moonlight full upon the fine face before her, and gave it a heavenly radiance. There was no trace of guilt upon that open brow—not in the calm smile, not in the truthful glance of the eyes bent on her. "There is no guilt now, my child—I do forgive the past, and may

God forever bless you! Now, Edward, I must know all."

Trustfully and humbly, Edward Mellen, kneeling by her side, confessed his first temptation, his wanderings, his remorse and his trials. The strong man wept like an infant. "Oh! mother! it was a dreadful suffering, and how I longed to come to you, for you wouldn't have despised me; but they would have scorned me and you too for my sins, and I couldn't bear that. But I did not sink lower, mother; those companions had no more power over me; and thro' all these long years, mother, I felt that you were bending over me. I gained wealth in foreign lands, gained it honestly, but I couldn't bring wealth to atone for the past. Oh! I couldn't come then; but now, they love your son, and honor him as they do those that have never fallen, and Heaven will grant that I may yet preach the doctrines of the Christian faith, and bear record of a mother's influence. You do not cast me off, mother?"

"Never, never, my son!" exclaimed the widow with unwonted energy, "and my life may yet be spared, till I see you forgiven by those you have wronged, and respected by all as you were in childhood."

Years have gone by since that evening, and the widow Mellen is seen every sabbath in the corner pew at church; but not now wearing that sad smile of grief. Her eye turns to the group of little ones by her side and the pleasant face of her daughter Fanny; then, changing from happy affection to maternal pride, it rests on the thoughtful speaker in the desk. She loves to watch the gaze of the congregation, and the approving smile of the aged pastor, who has resigned his office to Edward, and as she turns away she breathes a prayer that her Heavenly Father will ever guide and guard her erring but repentant son.

## THE SOLDIER'S WIFE.

### A THRILLING SKETCH.

One of the most striking cases of presence of mind and self-possession of which I have any recollection, came to light in a trial which took place some years since in Ireland. The story looks like a fiction; but I have reason to believe it quite true. A woman travelling along a road to join her husband, who was a soldier, and quartered at Athlone, was joined by a pedlar, who was going the same way. They entered into conversation during a walk of some hours; but as the day began to wane, they agreed that they should stop for the night at a house of entertainment, and pursue their pedestrian journey the next day. They reached an humble inn, situated in a lonely spot by the road-side; and, fatigued after a long day's walk, they were glad to find themselves under the shelter of a roof. Having refreshed themselves with the substantial supper set before them, they expressed a wish to retire. They were shown into the traveller's room, and went to rest in their respective beds. The pedlar, before retiring, had called the landlord aside, and given into his keeping the pack, which he had unstrapped, telling him that it contained a considerable sum of money and much valuable property. They were not long in bed before the pedlar fell into a sound sleep; but the poor woman, perhaps from over-fatigue, or from thoughts of meeting her husband next day, lay awake. A couple of hours might have passed, when she saw the door opened, and a person enter holding a light, which he screened with his hand. She instantly recognized in him one of the young men she had seen below—son to the landlord. He advanced with stealthy step to the bedside of the pedlar, and watched him for a few seconds. He then went out, and entered again with his brother and father, who held in his hand a large pewter basin. They went on tiptoe to the bedside, where the pedlar lay in a deep sleep. One of the young men drew out a knife, and while the father held the basin so as to receive the blood, he cut the poor victim's throat from ear to ear. A slight half audible groan, and all was still, save the cautious movements of the party engaged in the fatal deed. They had brought in with them a large sack, into which they quickly thrust the unresisting body. The poor woman lay silently in her bed, fearing that her turn would come next. She heard low muttering among the men, from which she soon gathered that they were debating whether they should murder her too, as they feared she might have in her power to betray them. One of them

said he was sure that she was asleep, and that there was no occasion to trouble themselves more; but to make sure of this being the case, one came to her bedside with the candle in her hand, and the other with a knife. She kept her eyes closed as if in sleep, and had such complete command over herself as not to betray in her countenance any sign that she was conscious of what was going on. The candle was passed close to her eyes; she never winced, or showed by any movement of features or of limb that she apprehended danger. So the men whispered that she was so soundly asleep that nothing was to be feared from her; and they went out of the room, removing the sack which contained the body of the murdered man. How long must that night of horror have seemed to the poor woman—how frightful was its stillness and its darkness! The presence of mind which she so astonishingly enabled her to act a part to which she owed her life, sustained her all through the trying scenes which she had yet to pass. She did not hurry from her room at an unseasonable early hour, but waited till she had heard all the family stir for some time; she then went down, and said she believed she had overslept herself, in consequence of being greatly tired. She asked where the pedlar was, and was told that he was in too great a hurry to wait for her, but that he had left sixpence to pay for her breakfast. She sat down composedly to that meal, and forced herself to partake with apparent appetite the food set before her. She appeared unconscious of the eyes which with deep scrutiny, were fixed upon her. When the meal was over, she took leave of the family and went her way without the least appearance of discomposure or mistrust. She had proceeded but a short way, when she was joined by two strapping-looking women; one look was sufficient to convince her that they were the two young men, and one thought to assure her that she was yet in their power, and on the very verge of destruction. They walked by her side, entered into conversation, asked her where she was going, and told her that their road lay the same way; questioned her as to where she had lodged the night before, and made most minute inquiries about the family inhabiting the house of entertainment. Her answers were quite unembarrassed, and said that the people of the house had appeared to be decent and civil, and had treated her very well. For two hours the young men continued by her side conversing with her, and watching with the most scrutinizing glances any change in her countenance, and asking questions which had she not been fully self-possessed, might have put her off her guard. It was not till her dreaded companions had left her, and till she saw her husband coming along the road to meet her, that she lost the self-command which she had so successfully exercised, and throwing herself into his arms, fainted away.

## A German Execution.

An account from Stuttgart, June 20, states, during the last ten years there had not been any capital executions in that city. A day or two before a scaffold was erected for the decapitation of a young woman named Margaret Rudhardt, who was sentenced to death for poisoning her husband with arsenic. The scene was marked by a strange incident. The execution here takes place with a sword. The culprit is placed on his knees, with a white handkerchief over his eyes; one of the executioner's assistants then lies down before the culprit, seizes him with his two hands by the thighs, and keeps him immovably fixed to the ground, whilst another holds him by the hair, drawing his head back, so that the muscles of his neck are extended, when the executioner, with his sword, which he grasps with both hands, and then separates the head and body.

At the moment when the latter was about to inflict the blow upon Margaret Rudhardt, a man rushed through the crowd that surrounded the scaffold, crying with a stentorian voice, "Stop! stop!" and waving at the same time over his head a white handkerchief. The executioner instinctively dropped his arm; his aids loosened the victim, removed the bandage from her eyes, and Margaret Rudhardt, who during those awful preparations had exhibited a good deal of calmness, rose smiling, for the unhappy woman, as well as the executioner and every body, including the recorder of the royal court, who was on the platform, drawing up the

minutes of the execution, believed that she was pardoned. This, however, was not the case. The author of the incident was arrested, and it was soon discovered that he had been an old servant of Margaret Rudhardt's father, who imagined that, by interrupting the execution, it would be retarded, and the daughter of his former master have a chance of obtaining her pardon. After an interval of half an hour, which was a painful respite for Margaret Rudhardt, she again was obliged to kneel, and the execution was completed.

## Jewish Anecdotes.

The following anecdotes are translated from an interesting work, published at Paris, entitled, *Les Martires du Samedi* (the Saturday Mornings), written by G. Ben Levi, for the use of the Israelites of France.

## David in the Wilderness.

### A LEGEND.

When King David was flying across the Desert of Ziph, pursued by Saul, he grew impatient at the quantity of spider's webs he had to break, when he was pricked by a worm, he cried out in his passion, "Great God! why hast thou created flies and spiders which are of no use, and only serve to hurt me?" "I will make you understand," said a prophetic voice.

Some time afterwards he descended Mount Achid, and ventured by night into the camp of Saul to deprive him while asleep, of his arms and cap. After having succeeded in this project, he was about to retire when his foot became entangled in the legs of the faithful Abner, who slept beside Saul. Great was the embarrassment of David, how he should disengage his foot from the hold of Abner without awakening this valiant servant, and to find himself surprised thus in the enemy's camp.

David's anxiety was at its height, when a fly bit Abner on the leg, and the pain which the warrior felt, made him make a movement of which David availed himself to withdraw his foot, and he then fled quickly thanking God, that he had created flies.

Saul, however pursued him into the Desert; and to escape him David hid himself in a cavern, when God sent a spider which wove its web across the entrance of the cavern. Saul and Abner were quickly on the footsteps of the fugitive, and Abner having said "he is doubtless concealed in the hollow of this rock, let us go and look if he be not concealed there."

"It is useless," answered Saul, "do you not see that the entrance of this cavern is covered with a spider's web and that no one could have entered without breaking this tissue?"

"You are right," answered Abner, and they retired to continue their search elsewhere.

Then David cast himself on the ground and cried, Lord pardon me for having doubted thy wisdom; henceforth my feeble understanding shall not cease to humble itself before the sublime harmonies of thy creations. Lord, the smallest of thy creatures is of use to man; the spiders and the flies themselves, have a part to perform in nature. Lord, what thou sayest is well; what thou doest is just.—*Noah's Messengers.*

BEAUTY.—Let me see a female possessing the beauty of a meek and modest deportment—of an eye that speaks intelligence and purity within—of the lips that speak no guile; let me see in her a kind and benevolent disposition, a heart that can sympathize with distress, and I will never ask for the beauty that dwells in "ruddy lips," or "flowing tresses," or "snowy hands," or the forty other et ceteras upon which our poets have harped for so many ages. These fade, when touched by the hand of time; but those ever enduring qualities of the heart shall outlive the reign of time, and grow brighter and fresher, as the ages of eternity roll away.

Many of our greatest men have sprung from the humblest origin, as the lark, whose nest is on the ground, soars highest in the air. Narrow circumstances are the most powerful stimulants to mental expansion, and the early frowns of fortune the best security for their smiles.

To speak harshly to a person of sensibility is like striking a harp-chord with your fist.

Friendship often ends in love; but love, in friendship—never.

"Back out" is the usual end to the poet's